

CLASSIFICATION OFFICE DECISION

Title of publication: Wicked Camper GCT799

Other known title(s): Not stated

OFLC ref: 1600222.000

Medium: Vehicle

Maker: The Wicked Cult Limited

Country of origin: New Zealand

Language: English

Applicant: Commissioner of Police

Classification:	Objectionable.
------------------------	----------------

Descriptive note: None

Display conditions: None

Date of entry in Register: 28 April 2016

Date of direction to issue a label: No direction to issue a label has been issued

Date of notice of decision: 28 April 2016

Summary of reasons for decision:

‘Wicked Camper GCT799’ is a campervan offered for hire by a business known as Wicked Campers. These vans are predominantly hired by overseas tourists who travel around New Zealand on a limited budget, and are common to see throughout New Zealand on roads and at backpacker destinations.

The Classification Office received photographs of the images and text that appear on the front, the back and on both sides of the campervan in order to be able to examine it for classification. This van and several others were submitted for classification on behalf of the Commissioner of Police under s13(1)(ab) of the Films, Videos, and Publications Classification Act 1993 (FVPC Act). This van has bright graffiti-style graphics that includes the well-known Disney character, Snow White, snorting cocaine or a similar substance up her nose.

The campervan is classified as objectionable in its current form because of the extent and degree to which, and manner in which, it promotes and encourages criminal acts, namely drug use, to an wide audience that will include children and young teenagers. The images and text on the campervan present drug use in a subversive, celebratory manner. The campervan’s availability in

public places has the effect of promoting and encouraging hard drug use as normal, acceptable and fun. Young viewers attracted by large and colourful images of favourite childhood characters using drugs do not have the maturity of judgment to recognise the transgressive nature of the material and are vulnerable to its normalising influence. The ongoing effect of impressionable young people's exposure to the material is likely to be the encouragement of attitudes that lead to experimentation with criminal behaviour.

In a framework set by the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990, classification decisions must be reasonable and demonstrably justifiable. Freedom of expression entails a certain tolerance for the depiction of drug use in various media. Films or DVDs, for instance, allow a high level of control over the manner and circumstances of viewing, including access. This same agency and control is not available when the medium is a campervan designed specifically for public display as a business promotion. The protection of children and young teenagers from harmful material is paramount in this instance.

Because of the likelihood of harmful and potentially ongoing effects on young viewers, a classification of R16, which would prevent access by children and young teenagers, has been considered. However, the medium means the only way to protect children and younger teenagers from harm is to completely restrict the campervan from being publicly available to anyone. Any lower restriction would in practice amount to a ban as the campervans would not be able to be driven on public roads without breaching the terms of the restriction. A classification of objectionable, on the other hand, clearly indicates to the owners, law enforcement, and the general public that the availability of the campervan is likely to cause injury to the public good.